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The Wellness Exchange



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Solutions for a Healthier WorkplaceSM

For more information call 1-800-765-3277 or visit www.bhsonline.com



Take Care of the Earth! April 22nd is Earth Day 2007



On April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans joined together to demonstrate for a healthy, sustainable environment. 37 years later, Earth Day continues to be celebrated across America. Read on for more information on how you can help make the Earth a cleaner, healthier planet for now and for generations to come!

Save Energy

- ~ Use the Energy Star program (www.energystar.gov) to find energy efficient products for your home.
- ~ Turn off appliances and lights when you leave the room.
- ~ Use the microwave to cook small meals.
- ~ Wherever possible, cut back on air conditioning and heating use.
- ~ Insulate your home, water heater, and pipes.
- ~ Replace incandescent light bulbs with Energy Star qualified Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs (CFL) (see box to right.)

Sell or Donate Goods

- ~ Donate or resell items to thrift stores or other organizations.
- ~ Sell secondhand items at fairs, bazaars, swap meets, and garage sales.
- ~ Give hand-me-down clothes to family members, neighboring families, or the needy.
- ~ Conduct a food or clothing drive.

Use Less Water

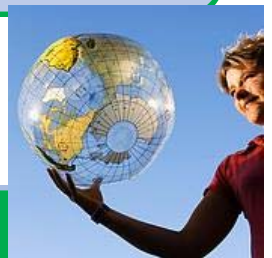
- ~ Turn off the water while shaving or brushing your teeth.
- ~ Take short showers instead of baths.
- ~ Only run the dishwasher when it's full.
- ~ Use the appropriate load size selection on the washing machine.
- ~ Buy high-efficient plumbing fixtures & appliances.
- ~ Fix all leaks; a leaky toilet can waste 200 gallons every day.
- ~ Water your lawn and/or garden during the coolest part of the day.
- ~ Set your sprinklers so that they water the lawn or garden only, not the sidewalk.

What Can You Do to Help?

- Replace a light bulb.** Exchange your incandescent light bulbs with CFLs.
- Bring your own bag.** Reuse old grocery bags or bring a cloth bag to the grocery store. Set a good example!
- Don't drive.** Walk or ride your bike when you can. You'll be saving gas and reducing air pollution, and at the same time, getting exercise and fresh air!
- Clean up your community.** Get the neighbors together; pick up trash in your neighborhood and on your streets.
- Recycle.** Get information about your local curbside service. Recycling reduces the amount of waste that goes into landfills and reduces the amount of toxic chemicals absorbed into the earth.
- Visit a Farmer's Market.** Buy locally produced foods.
- Use your own mug.** When you buy coffee in the morning, bring your own mug. It might surprise you to know that Americans throw away 25 **billion** Styrofoam cups each year.

If every household in the U.S. replaced one light bulb with a CFL, it would save enough energy to light more than 2.5 million homes for a year and prevent greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions of nearly 800,000 cars.

For More
Information, visit
www.earthday.gov
www.earthday.net



A Brief History:

- 1970:** Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- 1974:** Congress passes the Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.
- 1978:** The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans because CFCs destroy the ozone layer, which protects the earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.
- 1985:** Scientists report that a giant hole in the earth's ozone layer opens each spring over Antarctica.
- 1990:** Congress passes the Clean Air Act Amendments, requiring states to demonstrate progress in improving air quality.
- 1991:** Federal agencies begin using recycled content products.
- 1992:** EPA launches the Energy Star® Program to help consumers identify energy-efficient products.
- 1993:** EPA reports secondhand smoke contaminates indoor air, posing serious health risks to nonsmokers.
- 2003:** The Healthy Forests Restoration Act is signed, helping to prevent forest fires and safeguard and preserve the nation's forests.



Alcohol: What You Should Know

For more information call 1-800-765-3277 or visit www.bhsonline.com



If you are like many Americans, you may drink alcohol occasionally. Or, like others, you may drink moderate amounts of alcohol on a more regular basis. But even moderate drinking, under certain circumstances, can be risky. And if you drink at more than moderate levels, you may be putting yourself at risk for serious health problems as well as problems with family, friends, and co-workers. April is Alcohol Awareness Month; read on for important information!

What is Alcoholism?

Alcoholism, also known as alcohol dependence, is a disease that includes the following four symptoms:

Craving: A strong need, or urge, to drink.

Loss of control: Not being able to stop drinking once drinking has begun.

Physical dependence: Withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, sweating, shakiness, and anxiety after stopping drinking.

Tolerance: The need to drink greater amounts of alcohol to get "high."

The risk for developing alcoholism is influenced both by a person's genes and by his or her lifestyle.

Women and Alcohol

It is estimated that more than 5 million women in the United States drink in such a way that their health, safety, and general well-being are compromised. Specific health risks of drinking alcohol include:

~ **Liver disease:** Women are more likely than men to develop alcoholic hepatitis and to die from cirrhosis.

~ **Brain disease:** Most alcoholics have some loss of mental function, reduced brain size, and changes in the function of brain cells. Research suggests that women are more vulnerable than men to alcohol-induced brain damage.

~ **Cancer:** Many studies report that heavy drinking increases the risk of breast cancer. Alcohol also is linked to cancers of the digestive tract and of the head and neck.

~ **Heart disease:** Among heavy drinkers, men and women have similar rates of alcohol-related heart disease, even though women typically drink less alcohol over the course of a lifetime than men.

The Facts about Alcohol

- ~ About 18 million Americans have alcohol problems.
- ~ More than half of all adults have a family history of alcoholism or problem drinking.
- ~ More than nine million children live with a parent dependent on alcohol and/or illicit drugs.
- ~ One-quarter of all emergency room admissions, one-third of all suicides, and more than half of all homicides and incidents of domestic violence are alcohol-related.
- ~ Heavy drinking contributes to illness in each of the top three causes of death: heart disease, cancer, and stroke.
- ~ Almost half of all traffic fatalities are alcohol-related.
- ~ Fetal alcohol syndrome is the leading known cause of mental retardation.
- ~ Alcohol and drug abuse costs the American economy an estimated \$276 billion per year in lost productivity, health care expenditures, crime, motor vehicle crashes, and other conditions.

What Is a Drink?

A standard drink is:

- One 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler
- One 5-ounce glass of wine
- 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.



Social and Legal Problems

The more heavily you drink, the greater the potential for problems at home, at work, with friends, and even with strangers.

These problems may include:

- ~ Arguments with or separation from your spouse and other family members
- ~ Difficult or strained relationships with co-workers
- ~ Absence from or lateness

to work with increasing frequency

- ~ Loss of employment due to decreased productivity
- ~ Committing or being the victim of violence

Long-Term Health Problems

Some problems, like those mentioned above, can occur after drinking over a relatively short period of time. But other problems, including liver disease, heart disease, certain forms of cancer, pancreatitis, nerve damage, and epilepsy often develop more gradually and may become evident only after many years of heavy drinking.

How Can You Tell if Someone has a Problem?

Answering the following four questions can help you find out if you or a loved one has a drinking problem:

- ~ Have you ever felt you should cut down on your drinking?
- ~ Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
- ~ Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?
- ~ Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or to get rid of a hangover?

One "yes" suggests a possible alcohol problem. More than one "yes" means it is highly likely that a problem exists. If you think that you or someone you know might have an alcohol problem, it is important to see a doctor or other health care provider right away.